

Common Core Maps - Grade 11

# CHALLENGES AND SUCCESS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

# *Essential Question*



Does twentieth-century American literature represent a fulfillment of America's promise, as discussed in unit four?

# Overview

It includes a few titles from the twenty-first century as well. The unit traces the flourishing of the American short story and the development of the novel and dramas since World War II. Students will read masters of the southern short story—writers like Eudora Welty and Flannery O'Connor. The unit also explores works by Richard Wright and Ralph Ellison, whose texts expose tensions within the emerging African American literary tradition. The 1960s are rich with both informational and literary works mirroring profound cultural shifts in the American landscape. This unit also emphasizes how the changing political landscape, including the words of leaders like John Fitzgerald Kennedy and Ronald Reagan, shaped the world in which we live.

# Focus Standards

- RL.11-12.5: Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.
- RL.11-12.7: Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (Include at least one play by Shakespeare and one play by an American dramatist.)
- RI.11-12.2: Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.
- W.11-12.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- SL.11-12.3: Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.
- L.11-12.6: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
  - Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.
  - Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.



# Student Objectives

- ⦿ Analyze the development of the short story in post-World War II America.
- ⦿ Trace the development of the “southern gothic” tradition in American literature.
- ⦿ Distinguish between the two distinct views within the African-American literary tradition as represented by Richard Wright and Ralph Ellison.
- ⦿ Explore the nature of African-American literature during the civil rights movement following World War II.
- ⦿ Recognize the emergence of dynamic views represented in literary texts by first- and second-generation Americans.
- ⦿ Explain how the “Beat Generation” challenges traditional forms and subjects in literature.
- ⦿ Identify multiple postmodernist approaches to critical analysis of literature.
- ⦿ Note the influence that postmodernism has had on the “common reader.”

# Suggested Works

## Literary Texts

### Short Stories

- ⦿ “Petrified Man” (Eudora Welty)
- ⦿ “A Good Man is Hard to Find” (Flannery O’Connor)
- ⦿ “The Swimmer” (John Cheever)
- ⦿ “A Small, Good Thing” (Raymond Carver)
- ⦿ “Flying Home” (Ralph Ellison)
- ⦿ “The Man Who Was Almost a Man” (Richard Wright)
- ⦿ “A & P” (John Updike)
- ⦿ “Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?” (Joyce Carol Oates)

### Plays

- ⦿ Death of a Salesman (Arthur Miller)
- ⦿ A Streetcar Named Desire (Tennessee Williams)

### Novels

- ⦿ Invisible Man (Ralph Ellison)
- ⦿ Native Son (Richard Wright)
- ⦿ Seize the Day (Saul Bellow)
- ⦿ The Catcher in the Rye (J.D. Salinger)
- ⦿ Cat’s Cradle (Kurt Vonnegut)
- ⦿ The Joy Luck Club (Amy Tan)
- ⦿ Love Medicine (Louise Erdrich)
- ⦿ Song of Solomon (Toni Morrison)
- ⦿ All the Pretty Horses or The Road (Cormac McCarthy)

# Suggested Works

## Poems

- ⦿ “Sestina” (Elizabeth Bishop) (E)
- ⦿ “The Fish” (Elizabeth Bishop) (EA)
- ⦿ “One Art” (Elizabeth Bishop) (EA)
- ⦿ “America” (Allen Ginsberg)
- ⦿ “Love Calls us to the Things of This World” (Richard Wilbur)
- ⦿ “Skunk Hour” (Robert Lowell)
- ⦿ “Memories of West Street and Lepke” (Robert Lowell)
- ⦿ “July in Washington” (Robert Lowell)
- ⦿ “The Black Swan” (James Merrill)
- ⦿ “The Octopus” (James Merrill)
- ⦿ “Days of 1964” (James Merrill)

# Suggested Works

## Informational Texts

### Speeches

- “Address to the Broadcasting Industry” (Newton Minow)
- Inaugural Address (John F. Kennedy) (January 20, 1961)
- “Brandenburg Gate Address” (Ronald Reagan) (June 12, 1987)

### Essays

- “On Being an American” (H.L. Mencken)
- “Seeing” or other essays from *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* (Annie Dillard)
- “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” (Martin Luther King, Jr.)

### Biography and Autobiography

- *Patton: A Biography* (Alan Axelrod) (selections)
- *The Autobiography of Malcolm X: as Told to Alex Haley* (Malcolm X) (selections)

### Historical Nonfiction

- *The Feminine Mystique* (Betty Friedan)



# Suggested Works

## Art, Music, and Media

### Music

- ⦿ “This Land is Your Land” (Woody Guthrie)
- ⦿ “Where Have All the Flowers Gone?” (Pete Seeger)
- ⦿ “Blowin’ in the Wind” (Bob Dylan)

### Media

- ⦿ A Streetcar Named Desire (1951)
- ⦿ A Streetcar Named Desire (1955)

# Sample Activities and Assessments

***Teachers Note:** After reading and discussing a work or pairing of works as a class, students prepare for seminars and essays by reflecting individually, in pairs, and/or in small groups on a given seminar/essay question. Ideas are student generated in this way. (Seminar/Essay assignments include more than one question. Teachers may choose one or all the questions to explore in the course of the seminar; students should choose one question for the essay.) Seminars should be held before students write essays so that they may explore their ideas thoroughly and refine their thinking before writing. (Click [here](#) to see a sample seminar scoring rubric.) Page and word counts for essays are not provided, but teachers should consider the suggestions regarding the use of evidence, for example, to determine the likely length of good essays. In future iterations of these maps, links to samples of student work will be provided.*

## Collaborate

- Reflect on seminar questions, take notes on your responses, and note the page numbers of the textual evidence you will refer to in your seminar and/or essay answers. Share your notes with a partner for feedback and guidance. Have you interpreted the text correctly? Is your evidence convincing? (RL.11-12.1, SL.11-12.1)

## Seminar and Essay

- Discuss the characterization techniques authors use to create Huckleberry Finn, Jay Gatsby, and John Grady Cole. How are they the same? How are they different? Are some more effective than others? Why? Use at least three pieces of evidence to support your original thesis statement. (RL.11-12.3, W.11-12.2, SL.11-12.1, L.11-12.5)

# Sample Activities and Assessments

## Seminar and Essay

- Compare a scene from the 1951 film of *A Streetcar Named Desire* with the same scene in the 1995 film or a stage performance. Do you think the film or stage production is faithful to the author's intent? Why or why not? Cite at least three pieces of evidence to support an original thesis statement. (RL.11-12.7, W.11-12.2, SL.12.1)

## Seminar and Essay

- “How do Willy Loman and Tommy Wilhelm contend with being ‘nobody’?” Cite at least three pieces of evidence to support an original thesis statement. (RL.11-12.9, W.11-12.2, SL.11-12.1, W.11-12.9a)

## Oral Presentation

- Play recordings of two of the poets reading their work. Make a presentation to the class about how their reading influences one's interpretation of the poem (e.g., tone, inflection, pitch, emphasis, pauses, etc.). (RL.11-12.4, W. 11-12.6, SL.11-12.4, SL.11-12.5, SL.11-12.6)

# Sample Activities and Assessments

## Research Paper

- Write a research paper in which you trace the influence of World War II on American literature. Cite at least three pieces of textual evidence and three secondary sources to support your original thesis statement. (RL.11-12.1, W.11-12.7, W.11-12.8, W.11-12.9)

## Oral Commentary

Students will be given an unseen passage from a contemporary novel, poem, or short story and asked to provide a ten minute commentary on two of the following questions:

- What are the effects of the dominant images used in this extract?
- Identify the poetic techniques used in this poem (or extract from a poem). Relate them to the content.

*What do you think the important themes in this extract are? (RL.11-12.1, 4, SL.11-12.4)*



# Additional Resources

## Additional Resources

[Flannery O'Connor's "A Good Man is Hard to Find": Who's the Real Misfit?](#) (National Endowment for the Humanities) (RL.11-12.9)

In this lesson, students will explore these dichotomies—and challenge them—while closely reading and analyzing “A Good Man is Hard to Find.” In the course of studying this particular O'Connor short story, students will learn as well about the 1950s South, including the evolution of transportation in the U.S., fueled by the popularity of the family car and the development of the U.S. highway system; the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court case that helped divide the “Old South” from the “New South”; and the literary genre known as the “Southern Gothic,” or “Southern Grotesque.”

[Exploring \*A Streetcar Named Desire\*](#) (ArtsEdge, The Kennedy Center) RL.11-12.3)

Students study setting, plot, and character development in Tennessee Williams’ play, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and discuss its impact on American theatre. Students will participate in a group reading and analysis of the play and share their collective findings with the class.

[Every Punctuation Mark Matters: A Mini-lesson on Semicolons](#) (ReadWriteThink) (RI.11-12.9, L.11-12.2, W.11-12.5)

Martin Luther King, Jr.’s “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” demonstrates that even the smallest punctuation mark signals a stylistic decision, distinguishing one writer from another and enabling an author to move an audience. In this mini-lesson, students first explore Dr. King’s use of semicolons and their rhetorical significance. They then apply what they have learned by searching for ways to follow Dr. King’s model and use the punctuation mark in their own writing. Note that while this lesson refers to the “Letter from a Birmingham Jail,” any text which features rhetorically significant use of semicolons can be effective for this mini-lesson.

# Terminology

- ⦿ Beatniks/the beat generation
- ⦿ minimalism
- ⦿ non-linear narratives
- ⦿ parody
- ⦿ pastiche
- ⦿ postmodernism

# Grade 11 - Unit 6

## Common Core Curriculum Maps English Language Arts

More information:

[http://commoncore.org/maps/index.php/maps/grade 11 unit 6/](http://commoncore.org/maps/index.php/maps/grade%2011%20unit%206/)

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